

NATURAL SETTING

Copy

(11)

CHAPTER THREE — NATURAL SETTING. (POc ahontas County)

Roacco W, Brown Arbovale WVA

Part 1

Sept-27 -1940

(Sec B)

From the stand point of climate Pocahontas might be divided in two parts , that is, highlands and valleys or lowlands. Being a vary mountainous country with high elevations and located on the western side of the main Alleghenies, it is subject to severe winters. the valleys , however , being protected on either side, have less severe winters. During the summer months the weather is ideal seldom averaging over 70 degrees Fahrenheit during July the warmest month of the year.

✓ Because of the wide range in elevation and the varied directions at which the mountains and valleys lie, climatic differences within the County are great. Through the western and northern parts, the winters are cold, and the summers are cool with relatively few hot days; the lower Greenbrier River Valley and the ridge and Valley country to the east have less severe winters and considerably higher summer temperatures. With a few exceptions the nights are cool and ideal for sleeping.

The results of killing frosts have been observed in a few places as late as June 20, and considerable frost damage to tender vegetation have been observed even in July and August. ^{Fog} Fogs along the large streams and valleys in the spring and fall often prevents the severe frost damage that occurs in the adjoining uplands.

The direction of the prevailing air currents and their modifications by physiography often give a temperature variation of as much as 10 degrees within a distance of one or two miles. The Climate of Pocahontas County is typical of a great upland mass and characterized by a range of temperature that is not affected by nearness to the sea or other modifying influences.

(2)

Since the virgin forest timber is practically , all taken out of Pocahontas - County , the winds have become stronger ; the air tends to move lengthwise of the long valley of the Greenbrier River , and the winds are deflected by the topography of the country so that at times they blow at right angles to their normal course Winds in general blow harder at high altitudes , at night, and in the winter time,

Cyclones are not a common occurrence in Pocahontas County and very few wind storms and floods that are out of the ordinary.

According to the Weather Bureau station at Marlinton, situated at an elevation of 2131 feet, the annual (average) rainfall is 47.26 inches, with average depth of snow 33.7 inches, and the mean temperature is 48.1 F Degrees

This, however, is not representative of conditions in the plateau sections of the north-eastern part of the County. The Pickens station in Randolph County is more indicative of the north-eastern part of Pocahontas County, it shows an average annual rainfall of more than 60 inches and a snowfall of 100 inches.

The rainfall is well distributed through the year . It is greatest during the year, summer, when needed for growing crops and pasture, and least in fall and winter

The heaviest snow fall is usually in January and February.

The average frost-free period reported at Marlinton, is $4\frac{1}{2}$ months, between May 16 and October 1st The last killing frost reported was June 17 th and the earliest sept 6th. (these figures are quoted from the Soil Survey of Pocahontas County issued Feb 1938).

It has always been a common saying and belief, by the old farmers of Pocahontas County that the East Wind will kill their buck-wheat or injure it to the extent that it wont fill, make straw but not much grain.

Generally the snows are very heavy on the Allegheny mountains, the Back Allegheny and Cheat Mountains; The Staunton and Parkersburg turnpike crosses the Allegheny mountains between Monterey Virginia , and Travelers Repose , and crosses the Back Allegheny and Cheat Mountain between Durbin and Huttonsville of Randolph County, these points where the Pike crosses the mountains which is at an elevation of approximately 4000 feet will drift full of snow , and until recent years the traffic and U.S.Mails would be held up for several weeks on account of the heavy drifting snows . In the olden times when the traffic and transportation was done by the horse and buggy , and the four and six horse wagons were common to the people of Pocahontas County., traffic would be blocked by the snow drifts on the Allegheny mountain, and the Cheat mountain the greater part of the winter time.

But of recent times when the State Road Commission is equipped with the modern snow plows , and by the construction of the modern snow fences, along the sections that are apt to drift up, the roads are thereby kept free from the snow drifts ; and every day that it snows, the snow plows are kept running both day and night to keep the roads open for the public in general.

About once a year during the winter months , there will be heavy sleet which frequently will stop the traffic , but not longer than one or two days at a time

No other weather conditions that are out of the ordinary are perceptible in the matter of shifting the County,s economic welfare.